**Union Seminary**

James Cone with Bill Moyers

AME 2008

**The Cross and the Lynching Tree - 2006**

After the Civil War – 100 plus years of lynching – Southern

Martin and Malcolm

* Breaking the silence of the history of blackness and of Xtianity in the U.S.
* Lynching takes place during slavery because the “bodies” were worth too much
* Lynching reminded the black people of **who** was in control
* Religion is a search for humanity when one has no control in the physical
* Talking about lynching – discussed it in private not in school and church
* Moyers doesn’t remember any discussion “Spectacle Lynchings” until 1930’s
* Equates the noose with the Swastika
* “White America’s original sin” – 246 years of slavery, 100 years of lynching and forced discrimination
* Black and white people have innate relationship – like Jews and Muslims
* Lynching is “deep and ugly” – Terrible Beauty
* Niebuhr - Union Seminary
* Reinhold – an ethic that enables people to fight in the world
* Sinful beings seeking justice
* The lynching tree is indicative of the cross
* Power in the Powerless
* Gives blacks a perspective on their experience
* Lynching is a metaphor for America’s crucifixion of black people

How does this work for non-Christian story?

India } Religion is always a search for meaning for people who have no power in the world.

Africa }

Sri Lanka }

* Nobody who is lunching anybody can’t be following the cross
* What resistance means for the little people –
* Resistance against the odds
* Should encourage us to communicate and be in community

**And out of the South?**

* More deeply present in the North
* **Lynching in the West** – Mississippi is America
* Malcolm from the North, white supremacy is as prevalent in NYC as in Jackson, MS
* You can’t overcome anything unless you can acknowledge it

Blacks – 12 % - U.S. population

50 % - U.S. Prison population

Ghetto – crams people into small spaces to deprive a group of their humanity

God is Love? The power to see beyond the physical world – enables one to resist

The trouble is loving white people – that’s hard

Forgiveness of white people

* I see the Occupy Movement as one of the emerging modalities that could do this (the Beloved Community

talking to each other) Organize no matter how small the organization

Martin Luther King, Jr. – Beloved Community

Have hope

**Blackness**

Is Barack Obama “black enough”?

**Spirituals and the Blues**

Blues people found their humanity on F & S nights – those who didn’t go to church expressed their humanity

**Ironic Tenacity** – James Baldwin - Does the bad have the last word?